

Needham Coalition for Suicide Prevention
November 15, 2007
4:00pm-6:00pm
Needham Public Library Community Room

Minutes

Attendees: Janice Berns, Tom Denton, Joe Barnes, Deb Jacob, Donna Carmichael, Sandra Robinson, Bill Tilburg, Denise Garlick, George Johnson, Jon Mattleman, Beth Pinals, Dale Sokoloff, Jane Ward, Jim McCauley, John Kraemer, John Fountain, Jennifer Hitt, Terri Larrabee, Kathy Jurgens, Jamie Brenner Gutner, Jerry Wasserman, Michael Jackman, Susan Dana.

Guests: Greg Miller, Director, Massachusetts Suicide Prevention

- I. Introductions and review of minutes from October 18, 2007 meeting.
- II. Presentation followed by discussion: 4:15pm-5:30pm
Greg Miller, Director of the Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention updated the Coalition on what is happening in our state.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health received 3.5 million
DPH gave 1 million to the Executive Department of Veterans Affairs
DPH gave ½ million to the Executive Department of Elder affairs

DPH with the 2 million remaining will be issuing Capacity Building Grants for communities to develop service programs. These grants should be announced by the end of November 2007. Grants of \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 will be issued and monies should be spent by June 2008.

Communities should contact their local Veterans office to make sure they are aware of funding and to find out how they are planning to use the funds.

There is a 2-month waiting list for veterans to get to see a clinician.
Most veterans do not say anything regarding their emotional problems until they return home from duty so as not to delay their return home

Senior Centers funded to start doing mental health programs.

For elders depression screening has been done widely but very few clinicians are available for elders for follow up.

There is a stigma that all seniors are depressed.

Primary care doctors often put elders on medication for depression with little or no follow through.

There is a 2-week interval between a doctor's visit and an elder suicide.

A follow-up plan needs to be developed after depression is identified.

Medicare recipients are only eligible for 7 outpatient mental health visits.

Suicide rates are highest for middle-aged men and elders.

Very little headway has been made with middle-aged men. Population is very difficult to reach.

Hospitals screen for domestic violence and depression.

The Samaritans of Merrimack Valley have agreed to come to Needham to do an all day training on how to recognize depression or changes.

Frameworks program in New Hampshire is a consumer and family mental health advocacy group. The Frameworks program has been evaluated and seems to be successful. The website for Frameworks is www.nami.org.

III. Updates fro Sub-Committees:

Education/Youth: **Joe Barnes**

Paul Richards is being contacted by several area Principals on how to reach the Coalitions website so that they may review the coalitions reports. The new website for the town is www.needhamma.gov and the minutes and reports for the Coalition for Suicide Prevention can be found under the Health Department.

5th grade teachers in all the Needham elementary schools will have the QPR training.

Looking into having the support staffs at the high school and middle school receive the QPR training as well.

Recommending the QPR training be done with sports coaches.

After the first of the year Pollard Middle School will have implemented the "DOT Activity". This activity determines whether a student has an adult they can reach out to, have a relationship with; that they could go to if they felt "at risk". This activity will not be used at the elementary schools since it is felt the classroom teacher can assess this.

Recommending continuing to keep a presence in schools to let them know where they go whether it is for themselves or a friend.

Education/Adults: **Deb Jacob**

Working on developing a survey for focus groups with college-aged students, adults and senior citizens.

Finalizing a survey that will be administered to the physicians at the Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital.

Putting together an informational handout for the elderly.

Postvention: **Donna Carmichael**

Implementing crisis plan.

Reviewing the memorial guidelines.

Looking into what can be done after a suicide to support families.

Funeral Directors to be invited to the next Postvention meeting.

Communication/Advocacy: **Sandra Robinson**

Developing a campaign to heighten awareness of the website www.needhamacts.org and the new business/wallet sized information cards that were created by the Education/Adult committee.

The Elder section on the Needham ACTS website is currently being edited by Terri Larrabee and Chip Wilder. We will also check all the links to make sure we are still connected to the new town website.

Suggesting buying business card holders so that the information cards may be displayed in several locations such as doctor's offices, houses of worship, VNA and town offices.

Recommending creating a new larger information card and inserting the card in the bags delivered by meals on wheels.

Proposing sending out emails to parents of current and recently graduated students informing them of the Needham ACTS website.

Looking into the possibly of using the Library to ask people to visit the Needham ACTS website and then give feedback on the website and maybe take a short survey.

Recommended a section for Clergy to be added to the Needham Acts website.

Researching developing a two sided card stock piece which would have warning signs of depression and suicide on one side and emergency contact numbers on the other. This card could be possibly be inserted into the 2008 Needham phone books as well as distributed by the VNA and along with discharge papers from the hospital.

Research/Development: **Bill Tilburg**

In the process of reviewing, the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys from the High School and Middle School.

Developing a Pre and Post questionnaire to study the impact and effectiveness of the SOS program given to the students at the high school.

Provided feedback to the Adult Education Group on a survey for Physician Practice Patterns.

Requested that any QPR session feedback forms be forwarded to the Research and Development Committee for review.

IV. New Business:

During the holiday season, an email will be sent to last years Needham High School seniors letting them know about the Needham ACTS website.

The December 20th Coalition meeting is canceled.

Scheduling a Veteran to speak at the January 17, 2008 coalition meeting.

Next Meeting:
Thursday January 17, 2008
4:00pm-6:00pm
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